



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Community and Economic  
Development Initiative of Kentucky

## Rural Economic Development Innovation Rural Community/Regional Application

**Application Acceptance Period: February 11, 2019-April 5, 2019. DUE BY APRIL 5, 2019**

Letter of Interest Submission Deadline: March 8, 2019. (Please note: A Letter of Interest is not a requirement to submit a complete application)

### About REDI

The USDA Rural Development Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI) Initiative was designed to support regionalized planning to overcome multi-jurisdictional challenges and to better leverage federal, state, local and/or private funding.

In collaboration with the REDI Cooperators, the National Association of Counties, Rural Community Assistance Partnership, McClure Engineering Company, and Purdue University Center for Regional Development and University of Kentucky's Community Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky, the REDI Initiative will support rural communities by providing the opportunity to maximize their access to planning resources. These resources will enable the Cooperators to identify critical needs, create an actionable economic development plan, convene with potential partners, as well as implement project priorities that will ultimately improve economic stability and the quality of life in rural communities.

### Purpose

This application is for REDI technical assistance and capacity building, to be provided free of charge, through the REDI Cooperators. Applications will be scored, reviewed and selected on a competitive basis.

Participation in REDI will enable a rural community or region to create an economic development plan that will include: 1) Evidence-based assessment of community assets, challenges and opportunities; 2) Goals that are focused, logical, targeted, and timely with tasks identified and the entities responsible for carrying these actions clearly delineated; 3) Clear planning strategies that are intended to help produce, either directly or indirectly, improvements in the local and regional economy; and 4) Metrics to track implementation and ongoing progress of the economic plan.

### Benefits

Community and regional engagement with the REDI Cooperators will support technical assistance outcomes that build capacity within targeted areas of planning. This technical assistance will result in a strong regional economic development plan that identifies projects that may be eligible for other Rural Development programs and/or be a blueprint for leveraging other federal, state, local, or private sector resources.

Through a cooperative agreement with USDA Rural Development, REDI Cooperators will support a community and/or region with tools and technical assistance for economic development planning to create regional economic strategies.

Additional information about each of the Cooperators is provided on the next pages.



## National Association of Counties (NACO)

Through its previous success in developing and administering high-quality educational, training, and technical assistance programs for rural county leaders, the National Association of Counties Research Foundation (NACoRF) has provided tools and resources for many rural communities to take on their own economic and community development projects. NACoRF is partnering with the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) to develop a peer-learning program to teach local and regional leaders in rural areas how to implement multijurisdictional economic development plans and projects.

The program will include workshops, team mentoring, educational webinars, community case studies, and interactive learning opportunities. The goals of this effort are to: 1) inspire rural county and regional leaders to think creatively and regionally about new solutions to local challenges; 2) facilitate collaboration and partnership among neighboring counties within a region; and 3) empower counties to develop and implement economic and community strategies with emphasis on economic diversification; supporting a rural workforce; technological innovation and e-connectivity; regional asset-based development; and local quality of life.

Contact: Cheryl Burnett, Email: [CBurnett@naco.org](mailto:CBurnett@naco.org)

Website: <http://www.naco.org>



## Rural Community Assistance Partnership

The Rural Community Assistance Partnership ([www.rcap.org](http://www.rcap.org)) will deliver technical assistance utilizing the WealthWorks model ([www.wealthworks.org](http://www.wealthworks.org)) focused on helping rural regions and communities identify existing wealth or assets to build upon, recognize market opportunities and connect local assets to real market demand. WealthWorks allows local leaders to focus on what they have—instead of what they lack—to generate multiple forms of wealth that benefit residents today and for generations to come while rooting value in local people, places, and businesses.

WealthWorks offers a systematic approach that engages a wide range of community partners in turning enterprising opportunities into results. This model can complement or incorporate traditional economic development methods, but intentionally focuses on creating more value that becomes rooted locally. WealthWorks' value chain approach is a self-sustaining, distinctive economic development model. Value chains develop from local assets, holistically building relationships and filling gaps to link local small businesses and entrepreneurs with identified market demand.

Six hubs across the country will provide this value-chain development assistance:

- Community Roots (serving Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont)
- Central Appalachian Network (serving Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)
- Communities Unlimited (serving Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas)
- Region Five Development Commission (serving Minnesota)
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation (serving Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming)
- Rural Development Initiatives (serving Idaho, Oregon, and Washington)

Additional support in the Midwest will come online later in the REDI initiative through the Midwest Assistance Program.

Contact: Ashley Zuelke, Email: [AZuelke@rcap.org](mailto:AZuelke@rcap.org)

Website: [www.rcap.org](http://www.rcap.org) / [www.wealthworks.org](http://www.wealthworks.org)



## McClure Engineering Company

McClure provides a full spectrum of engineering, planning, surveying, design, construction administration, placemaking, and funding assistance throughout the nation. The firm continues to expand its services and impact by working alongside communities to develop a people-centered blueprint for sustainable economic and community development.

For the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI), McClure is partnering with CO.STARTERS, a Chattanooga, Tennessee-based firm assisting communities to build entrepreneurial ecosystems through the introduction and use of proven resources and tools. The team will engage with four rural communities across the country. These communities will be guided through a planning process to identify and leverage existing assets to spur economic and community development, strengthen workforce pipelines, and build entrepreneurial ecosystems to capitalize on technological innovation. The outcome will be an economic development plan to improve the quality of life for both current and future residents. Community Visioning/Asset Mapping, Capacity Assessment, Action Plan Development, Local Leader and Small Business Capacity Building, and Implementation Technical Assistance will be undertaken to accomplish the goals of the project.

Contact: Alex Holland, Email: [aholland@mecresults.com](mailto:aholland@mecresults.com)

Website: <http://mcclureplacemaking.com/>



## Purdue University and the University of Kentucky

Purdue University and the University of Kentucky have joined forces to coordinate and implement the REDI Initiative in the North Central and Southern regions of the United States. Combined, the two regions represent 25 of the nation's 50 states and encompass 78 percent of the nation's nonmetropolitan counties (i.e., 1,544 counties). The Purdue team is part of the Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) and the Purdue Extension Community Development Program, while the Kentucky team is comprised of individuals connected to the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK). The mission of the PCRD is to pioneer new ideas and strategies that contribute to regional collaboration, innovation and prosperity while the overall purpose of CEDIK is to catalyze positive change to build engaged communities and vibrant economies.

Partnering with national and state colleagues from USDA Rural Development, the Purdue/Kentucky team will work with self-defined regions to realize the following key objectives: (1) Build a strong, inclusive regional team; (2) Study data on the five critical areas associated with the national "Agriculture and Rural Prosperity Task Force Report" and garner public input on these five key topics; (3) Equip the regional REDI team with the tools and strategies needed to build a sound strategic plan; (4) Guide the team in the producing a multi-year plan; (5) Assist the regional team in hosting focus group meetings to gain support for the plan by residents, agencies and organizations in the region; (6) Work with federal, state local and philanthropic organizations to explore funding sources to help put the regional plan into action; and (7) Track short, intermediate and long-term outcomes of the REDI program in the region.

Contact: Lionel J. Beaulieu, Email: [ljb@purdue.edu](mailto:ljb@purdue.edu)

Website: <https://www.pcrd.purdue.edu/> or <https://cedik.ca.uky.edu/>

If you choose to, please rank the four providers below (1-4) based on your preference for REDI Assistance considering their approach or a pre-existing relationship. Please note: If you are chosen for the REDI Initiative, you will be assigned to your preferred provider wherever possible, but it is not guaranteed.

- \_\_\_ National Association of Counties (NACO)
- \_\_\_ Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP)
- \_\_\_ McClure Engineering Company
- \_\_\_ Purdue University and the University of Kentucky

A successful application will demonstrate a strong rural focus, the capacity to participate in planning and implementation of economic development strategies, robust and inclusive partnerships, and an understanding of regional issues and assets.

**Rural Economic Development Innovation  
Rural Community/Regional Application**

**Application Acceptance Period: February 11, 2019-April 5, 2019**

Letter of Interest Submission Deadline: March 8, 2019 (Please note: A Letter of Interest is not a requirement to submit a complete application)

**Please complete the following information:**

**Main** contact person in your region/community: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary** contact person in your region/community: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please define the make-up of your rural area: (names of counties, community, and or region):

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Please provide a the specific name of your community, county, and /or region if applicable:

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**Rural Economic Development Innovation (REDI) aims to strengthen the capacity of rural communities (50,000 people or less in the United States plus Tribes and territories) in implementing strategic community and economic development plans as referenced in Section 379H of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act ([7 U.S.C. 2008v](#)).**

**The term ‘rural area’ means the Rural Business Service’s Rural Area definition as outlined in Section 343(a)(13)(A)(i) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act which states: any area other than: (1) A city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants; and (2) any urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a city or town.**

**Community Assessment (key elements in the selection process)**

1. Does the entire service area of your application meet the rural definition stated above? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
2. If not, what percentage of the geographic area is urban? \_\_\_\_\_  
How will your effort focus on those areas defined as rural? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are there one or more Opportunity Zones designated in the defined area of your application? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ <https://www.cdfifund.gov/pages/opportunity-zones.aspx>
4. Is your community/county, or part of your region, designated as "distressed"? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ <https://eig.org/dci/2018-dci-map-u-s-counties-by-state-map>
5. Are you located in or adjacent to a federally declared disaster area identified within the past five years, of which you are aware? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
6. Has your community or any of your counties been engaged in Economic Development Administration (EDA) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) planning effort within the past five years? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If yes when? \_\_\_\_\_ Please provide a link to the CEDS plan if applicable.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Is your county facing challenges with Substance Use Disorder to include alcohol or drugs, both prescribed and illicit? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
8. What is the main economic driver (industry) for your community/region? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Does your community/region include a federally recognized tribe? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
10. What cooperatives operate in your region (i.e. rural electric, credit unions, agriculture, etc.)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Please list the names of your local committee members and their affiliations. Please ensure that the committee is diverse and broad-based in terms of reflecting the mix of local stakeholders. Members can include (but not limited to) the following groups:

*(You may add additional pages if needed)*

- Demographic Mix of Residents \_\_\_\_\_
- Health \_\_\_\_\_
- Local Government \_\_\_\_\_
- Education \_\_\_\_\_
- Faith Based \_\_\_\_\_
- Nonprofit Organizations \_\_\_\_\_
- Community leaders \_\_\_\_\_

Business and Industry Representation \_\_\_\_\_

Workforce Development \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Please provide letters of commitment and support for your region/community as representation of the broad-based stakeholders. This can include but is not limited to:**

Industry Representation

Business Owners

Local Government

Residents

Education

Community leaders

Community Champion.

**Community/Regional Issues:**

Please provide your assessment of the quality of the following in your community or region. Place an 'X' under the response that best represents your view on each item.

Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Broadband services of 10/1 Mbps				
Broadband services of 25/3 Mbps				
Quality healthcare				
Mental health support services				
Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Healthy locally or regional-sourced fresh food?				
Housing stock that meets the needs of residents				
Skilled workforce to fill local/regional jobs				
Workforce training programs for youth & adults				
Quality childcare resources				
Programs/services that focus on local youth				

**Has your community or any of the counties been awarded federal, state, and/or philanthropic support for local or regional economic development efforts?** Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If yes when and by whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the box of any of the FIVE major themes listed below that are of critical importance to your community/region. For any theme(s) selected, place an “X” in front of the topics which are of highest priority.

**Theme 1: e-Connectivity of Rural America**

- Developing High Speed Connectivity
- Broadband education to promote adoption
- Funding strategies to expand broadband access
- Broadband applications (telehealth, civic engagement, public safety, public schools)
- Data on broadband presence/gaps
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Theme 2: Improving Quality of Life**

- Health care providers
- Mental health/crisis services
- Availability of fresh, healthy foods
- Childcare services
- Sound public safety
- Public Transportation
- Schools
- Disaster preparedness
- Arts/Culture/Tourism
- Housing
- Affordable housing for local workforce
- Downtown revitalization efforts
- Safe activities for youth
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Theme 3: Support Rural Workforce**

- Workforce development
- Apprenticeship programs
- Small Business Succession Planning
- Telework strategies
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Theme 4: Technological Innovation**

- Harnessing technology to increase efficiency and safety
- Access to educational opportunities through technology
- Access to healthcare opportunities through technology
- Online strategies for small local businesses
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Theme 5: Economic Development**

- Small Business Assistance
- Entrepreneur support
- Co-working facilities/support
- Identifying and developing a strong industry/economic sector(s)
- Expanding and improving livelihoods and opportunities
- Connecting your community/region to a larger regional system
- Infrastructure, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**From the list on page 7-8, of the topics that you have indicated under the major themes, what would you identify as the top TWO priorities in your community or region? Please indicate why you selected these TWO items (limit 300 words).**



**Please highlight an example where your community/region worked together as a collaborative team (with other communities or partners) to achieve an important local/regional goal. (limit 250 words)**



**Given the goals of the REDI Initiative, what might success look like in your community/region? What are some of the key strengths it will build on and what challenges will it help overcome?**



**Please provide any additional supportive information that you would like to highlight regarding your community/region (limit 300 words).**

Thank you for your interest in the REDI initiative. REDI technical assistance and capacity building support will be offered on a competitive basis; your application does not guarantee that you will receive assistance. REDI Cooperators and USDA Rural Development will determine the selection of participants.

By signing this document our community/region is committing to: (Please initial)

\_\_\_\_\_ Conducting outreach to community and business stakeholders during plan development and implementation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Working with the REDI technical assistance team to organize and attend meetings, such as site visits and phone interviews.

\_\_\_\_\_ Collecting and sharing any information that has already been developed, such as other regional community and economic development plans, local comprehensive plans, market research or feasibility studies, community visioning, or other analysis done of the community context or economic development strategies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Being willing to assign responsibility to partners for strategies and projects.

\_\_\_\_\_ Completing a Strong Regional and Local Economic Development Plan

\_\_\_\_\_ Implementing strategies of the Strong Regional Economic Development Plan

\_\_\_\_\_  
Community Representative (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Community Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Community Representative Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Community Rep (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Community Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Community Representative Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**One Page Letters of Interest can be emailed to USDA Rural Development Innovation Center [RD.Innovation@osec.usda.gov](mailto:RD.Innovation@osec.usda.gov) by March 8, 2019.** (Please note: A Letter of Interest is not a requirement to submit a complete application)

To submit this application and letters of support, please email one complete file to the USDA Rural Development Innovation Center with subject line “REDI Application” via [RD.Innovation@osec.usda.gov](mailto:RD.Innovation@osec.usda.gov)  
By **April 5, 2019**.

For questions:

**McClure Engineering**



**Alex Holland**

Email: [aholland@mecresults.com](mailto:aholland@mecresults.com)

**National Association of Counties (NACo):**



Cheryl Burnett,

Email: [CBurnett@naco.org](mailto:CBurnett@naco.org)

**Rural Community Assistance Partnership**



Ashley Zuelke,

Email: [AZuelke@rcap.org](mailto:AZuelke@rcap.org)

**Purdue University and the University of Kentucky**



Lionel J. Beaulieu

Email: [ljb@purdue.edu](mailto:ljb@purdue.edu)



**USDA Rural Development Innovation Center:**

Christine Sorensen,

Email: [Christine.Sorensen@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:Christine.Sorensen@wdc.usda.gov)

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